

having spread in recent times to Natal with the introduction of exotic palms and the erection of suitable structures on which it nests.

Measurements of the type: Wing 141, tail to tip of longer of 2 tail filaments 109 mm.

Remarks: The name selected for the new subspecies is from the Latin *celer*, swift, speedy, darting.

The races of the Palm Swift, *C. p. hypbaenes*, *C. p. myochrous* and *C. p. laemostigma*, are all greyer than *celer*, less warm brownish, with the throat streaking variable on a whiter ground. *C. p. hypbaenes*, described from Kumgha, on the Botletle R. in northern Botswana, is the palest of the assemblage with the white interstices of the throat streaking carried further down to the upper breast. *C. p. laemostigma* is a trifle darker above than *hypbaenes* but better marked over the venter, the dark throat streaks more intense and the breast and belly darker. *C. p. myochrous* is somewhat intermediate. The distinctions west (from northern South West Africa and southern Angola) to east (south of the Zambesi R. delta) are not always particularly clearly marked, and the range situation obtaining along the mid-Zambesi is particularly confusing (see map in Brooke 1972, and comments on races in this sector by Irwin 1980).

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Address. Dr. P. A. Clancey, Durban Museum, P.O. Box 4085, Durban 4000, South Africa.

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Notes on the Palm Crow *Corvus palmarum* in Haiti

by D. T. Holyoak

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The Palm Crow *Corvus palmarum* is confined to Cuba and Hispaniola. A few notes on its status, diet, flight, voice and nesting are summarised by Goodwin (1976) from the publications of Wetmore & Swales (1931), Barbour (1943) and Bond (1971). However, the species remains poorly known and it is apparently now uncommon, so notes made on a brief visit to Haiti in September 1981 are reported here.

Palm Crows were seen only at elevations of 1300-1900 m in the Massif de la Selle (south of Port-au-Prince). Three crows together were seen near Furcy, several pairs and groups of 3 along c. 15 km of footpath between Furcy and the summit of the pass above Seguin (road then in hopeless disrepair due to land-slips), and a compact flock of at least 20 just south of the summit of the pass. All the crows were seen in or flying between pine trees, which grew in small groves and lines, often near houses. However, the country was mostly only sparsely wooded with extensive terraced gardens

mainly devoted to maize) on steep slopes. Palm Crows were tame, allowing approach to within 20 m.

The call was a rather sharp and high-pitched cawing *craa-craa-craa-*, repeated with series of up to 6 of the *craa-* notes. In tone the call was more similar to that of the Fish Crow *Corvus ossifragus* or American Crow *C. brachyrhynchos* than to calls of the Carrion Crow *C. corone* (*contra* Bond 1971), but not closely similar to any of these. They called loudly and often, the group of c. 20 producing a babble of loud cawing from the tree tops.

A peculiar 'tail-flicking' movement was seen repeatedly. This is apparently not mentioned in the literature, despite its being quite different to displays that I have seen or found described for other *Corvus* species. The tail was slowly raised to slightly above horizontal and then sharply flicked down to a position where it pointed downwards about 45° below the horizontal. The wing tips were held slightly lowered throughout. The 'tail-flicks' were seen to be given at short intervals during a long bout of cawing (but not in time with the calls) as well as by birds that did not call. They appear to function as flight-intention or self-assertive movements.

One crow was seen to head-scratch indirectly (by raising the foot over a lowered wing) in the usual manner for Corvidae.

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Address. Dr. D. T. Holyoak, Department of Geography, University of Reading, 2 Earley Gate, Whiteknights Road, Reading RG6 2AU, U.K.

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A record of Whitehead's Swiftlet *Collocalia whiteheadi* from Bougainville Island

by S. Dillon Ripley

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Among a collection of birds made by Bruce Beehler and Don Hadden from the Crown Prince Range, Bougainville Island is a specimen of *Collocalia whiteheadi* which has not been recorded previously from this island.

The specimen was collected 15 km SSW of Arawa, North Solomons Province (Bougainville Island), Papua New Guinea (6° 20'S, 155° 20'E) at c. 1200 m on 17 June 1979, and was prepared as a study skin. The bird was sexed as a male, testis 2 x 1 mm. It was taken in a mist-net set in the forest; in this same series of nets Beehler and Hadden took *Collocalia spodiopygia* and *C. vanikorensis*. *C. esculenta* was also common at the locality. *C. whiteheadi* is easily distinguished from these other species by its larger size.

A number of populations of large, dull-coloured swiftlets occur in the New Guinea region. A recent analysis by Somadikarta (1967) showed that one population, collected from several localities on the northern watershed of western New Guinea, differs from all others in having but 3 toes. Three populations of large, 4-toed swiftlets have been named in Melanesia: *nuditarsus*, from the southern watershed of central and southeastern New